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- [illegible]

10. An information update count managing method according to claim 1, wherein the write step comprises a step of

11. An information update count managing method according to claim 10, wherein the update count storage area is in the same sector as an initialization operation program which is a first program to be executed after a reset.

a non-volatile memory wherein information can be written to the non-volatile memory in a unit of WORDs, each WORD including a plurality of bits, and information can be erased from the non-volatile memory in a unit of sectors, each sector including a plurality of WORDs, and wherein the non-volatile memory comprises an information storage area including at least one WORD in a first sector of the non-volatile memory; and

13. An information update count managing apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the first sector includes a first program to be executed by the micro processor unit.

14. An information update count managing apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the predetermined order is based on addresses of the WORDs.

19. An information update count managing apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the non-volatile memory comprises an update count storage area for storing the number of times information has been written in the information storage area.

25. A contents usage count storing apparatus, comprising:

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a micro processor unit for writing a contents usage count in the contents usage count storage area and for reading out the contents usage count which has been written in the contents usage count storage area.

27. A contents usage count storing apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the contents usage count is read out as the number of remaining times the content can be used.

29. An information update count managing apparatus,  
comprising:

a non-volatile memory wherein information can be written to the non-volatile memory in a unit of WORDs, each WORD including a plurality of bits, and information can be erased from the non-volatile memory in a unit of sectors, each sector including a plurality of WORDs; and

the non-volatile memory includes a boot area and a system area each including one or more sectors;

a micro processor unit initialization program for initializing the micro processor unit is provided in the boot area; and

30. An information update / count managing apparatus according to claim 29, wherein the boot area further comprises a check program for checking contents of the information storage area.

32. An information update count managing apparatus according to claim 29, wherein the boot area further comprises I/F control means for receiving a program to be stored in the system area from an upper control unit which is connected to the information update count managing apparatus.

34. An information update count managing apparatus according to claim 29, wherein immediately after the micro processor unit is reset, the micro processor unit executes the micro processor unit initialization program, and then waits for reception from the upper control unit which is connected to the information update count managing apparatus.

35. An information update count managing apparatus according to claim 29, wherein the micro processor unit calls a program in the boot area from a program in the system area.

[illegible]